

In May, 1999, Oliver Krage, Ms. Thompson's predecessor, contacted me regarding a potential health care crisis in the Roseland Community.

It appeared that, without additional federal and state funding, Roseland Hospital could be forced to close its doors within 18 months.

In addition to needing assistance covering operating costs, the hospital desperately needed a newer, bigger, more modern emergency room and additional intensive care units.

Roseland Hospital, a cornerstone of the community, was (and continues to be) the only hospital in a seven-mile radius that is home to 350,000 residents. The hospital treated more than 25,000 people annually in its emergency care and intensive care units. Of those patients, about 20 percent had no insurance and many more were underinsured.

It employed more than 300 Chicago residents and another 200 who lived in the south suburbs.

Clearly, the hospital needed to be saved.

So, in partnership with Illinois State Senator Emil Jones, I worked to secure government funds to restore the health of Roseland Community Hospital.

As a member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee of the United States Appropriations Committee, I was able to secure a total of \$1.9 million in 1999 and 2000. The money was designated for the construction of additional emergency rooms; larger registration and waiting areas; and an expanded intensive care unit, where occupancy rates ran at 99 percent.

I also assisted Roseland Hospital in securing federal funding for an HIV Capacity Building Grant and an Asthma Reduction Effort Grant.

I firmly believe that all citizens of the United States are entitled to the right of health care of equal high quality, and have proposed such a health care amendment to the United States Constitution.

In the meantime, I will continue to work diligently to secure federal funds to maximize the health care services that will be provided to the residents of the Second Congressional District.